

FOREIGN ROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE
ABIDJAN BUREAU

MAB 3007
5 April 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS

THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Monthly Report--Abidjan Bureau--March 1983

I. GENERAL

On 21 March the Ivory Coast Parliament approved a bill moving the capital of the country from Abidjan to Yamoussoukro, the birthplace of President Houphouet-Boigny about 140 miles northwest of Abidjan. The Council of Ministers is responsible for working out appropriate transfer procedures. So far there has been no indication of when the movement of government offices might begin. The American Embassy expects to make the move eventually, though a large consulate will almost certainly be maintained in Abidjan.

II. OPERATIONS

Monitorial/Editorial

1. Broadcasts from Radio Bardai, the anti-government radio station purportedly broadcasting from northern Chad, have evoked considerable interest among U.S. embassies in countries in which the radio can be heard. The State Department has determined that the station's transmitter probably is located in Ethiopia or the PDRY. The U.S. Embassy in Ndjamena noted the radio's tendency to feed the local rumor mill, which has an unsettling effect. The Embassy also stressed its appreciation of FBIS coverage of this station. Among the items processed from Radio Bardai during the month were a Transitional National Union Government (GUNT--the government of former Chadian leader Goukouni Oueddei) declaration deploring India's ban of a GUNT delegation to the Nonaligned Conference, battle reports on the fall of several towns to Goukouni forces, and charges that Israel has been supplying arms to the Habre regime through Zaire. Typically, the station leads off with one or more commentaries interspersed with music and then follows with a "newscast", which is largely devoted to anti-Habre material. The bureau filed almost 12,000 words from the radio during the month. Transcriptions of items mentioning the Ivory Coast have been supplied to the GOIC.

2. Surveys of Kinshasa and Dakar radios during March, conducted as part of a BBC-FCS request for program schedules of bureau radios, turned up some new programs which were added to bureau coverage. The Kinshasa survey revealed the station is heard here at 0800 gmt, after VOA goes off the same frequency, and a newscast at that time was added. The survey of Dakar,

planned for later in the year, was moved up after Dakar radio changed from medium to short wave broadcasts. Newscasts at 0700, 0705 and 1300 gmt are now monitorable, in addition to two evening casts, which were the only Dakar news programs heard on medium wave.

3. Since early in the month, reports have circulated about problems in Upper Volta as a result of the new government's increasing friendliness with Libya. On the 7th, Ouagadougou radio confirmed previous reports from AFP about a coup attempt that had been foiled, reportedly by another army medical doctor and some noncommissioned officers. Prime Minister Sankara subsequently traveled to Libya and North Korea for talks, a trip which reportedly evoked still more criticism. On the 21st, the radio announced the arrest of four writers for "agitations", "provocation", and "slandorous insinuations". And the Upper Voltan leaders attempted to answer criticism at the public rally on the 26th. The bureau held a monitor on overtime to attempt to record the speeches for subsequent processing as they occurred after the bureau's normal closing hour on Saturday, but because of poor reception, only the prime minister's speech was monitorable.

4. Accra Radio announced on the 11th that Ghana was reopening its borders with neighboring countries. Embassy officials were alerted because of Ivorian interest. On the 17th, Head of State Samuel Doe announced the reopening of Liberia's border with Sierra Leone, which had been closed because of a newspaper report that Doe's wife was involved in a plot against him, in a speech on Monrovia Domestic Service after his return from the Nonaligned Conference.

5. Accra Radio on the 31st carried a press conference by Provisional National Defense Council Adviser Captain Tsikata charging that U.S. Ambassador Smith had been meeting secretly in Lome with elements hostile to the Ghana government, citing an alleged West German document which linked the CIA with anti-PNDC activities. This was followed by further charges of a similar nature by two papers, the GRAPHIC and the VOICE. This was the most serious charge recently against the U.S. and ended a period when Ghana media had been relatively free of such allegations, which however have surfaced periodically since the advent of the PNDC.

III. ADMINISTRATION

Personnel

1. Monitor [] resigned on 17 March to return to Liberia. The bureau has tentatively selected a teacher who currently lives in central Ivory Coast as a replacement. He will be visiting the bureau in mid-April for final interviews.

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2. Monitor [] and Teletype Operator [] received PSI's during March, to FSN 3/3 and FSN 7/3 respectively.

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IV. VISITS

1. FBIS Engineer [redacted] and Collins/Rockwell Engineer
[redacted] visited the bureau from 1-5 April, as part of the
INTERNET survey.

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2. John Collier, Chairman of the Foreign Service Institute African Studies Program, visited the bureau on 8 March. He was in Abidjan as part of a familiarization tour of west and southern Africa. Ed Perkins, DCM in Monrovia, visited the bureau on 24 March. Perkins will be returning to Washington in May to become Director of the State Department's West African Affairs Office.

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[redacted]
Chief, Abidjan Bureau

Attachment:

Monthly Production Report

cc: Chief, Swaziland Bureau
Deputy Chief, London Bureau